GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:233
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2000
PEOPLE BELOW POVERTY LINE
PATY RIPPLE KYNDIAH;RAGHUNATH JHA

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the percentage of people living below poverty line has increased manifold and steps taken for their upliftment so far have proved futile;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the target fixed to uplift the persons below poverty line during the current Five Year Plan and the target achieved so far;

(d) the funds allocated for the purpose during the current plan period especially to the North-Eastern States under various schemes, State-wise;

(e) whether the States have utilised the funds allocated to them for the purpose;

(f) if not, the reasons therefor;

(g) whether the World Bank and other International Institutions have expressed dismay over the poor performance of anti-poverty schemes in the country; and

(h) if so, the steps taken by the Government to review the implementation of the said schemes?

Answer

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA)

(a) to (h): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in Reply to the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 233 admitted for reply on 8-8-2000 regarding People below Poverty Line.

The Planning Commission have estimated that the percentage of population living Below the Poverty Line in rural areas decreased from 56.44% in 1973-74 to 37.27% in 1993-94.

2. While no (annual) Physical Targets have been determined for Poverty Reduction during the current Five Year Plan, the Physical Achievements, in terms of the number of Below the Poverty Line (BPL) families assisted, under the (erstwhile) Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) during 1997-98 and 1998-99 and under the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) during 1999-2000, are as follows:-

Programme	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
	Families Asisted (Numbers)	Families Asisted (Numbers)	Swarozgaris Assisted (Numbers)
(i). Integrated Rural Dev. Programme	1706609	1677182	
(ii). Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana			927648

3. The funds allocated, available and utilised under the erstwhile IRDP and the SGSY in the North- Eastern States during 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 are shown in the enclosed Annexure. Difficult terrain, limitations of land records, lack of awareness and problems of access to Banks are amongst the main bottlenecks in the implementation of the SGSY in the North-Eastern States.

4. The World Bank Report No. 19471-IN entitled `India: Policies to reduce Poverty and Accelerate Sustainable Development` (January, 2000) mentions that while India`s Household Sample Surveys suggest that poverty reduction in the country may lately have been sluggish, the estimated slow down in the overall reduction in poverty could merely reflect a statistical inconsistency. The Report does not suggest that reforms have worked against the poor.

5. The steps initiated towards proper implementation of the SGSY include the following :-

(i) Training and sensitization of the State/DRDA and field level functionaries as well as Bank officials.

(ii) Regular consultations with the Reserve Bank of India, NABARD and Commercial Banks in regard to Credit facilities.

(iii) Participation of the States/UTs in National and International Trade Fairs to promote marketing of SGSY products.

(iv) Permission in respect of expenditure upto 40% during 1999-2000 & 2000-2001 for infrastructure development.

(v) Involvement of NGOs in the development of Self- Help Groups (SHGs).

(vi) Monitoring of the Programme through Monthly, Half-yearly and Annual Progress Reports.

(vii) Review of the Programme (at the State level) by the concerned State Level Coordination Committee.

(viii) Constitution of Vigilance and Monitoring Committees at the State, District and Block levels to monitor the implementation of the Programme (Local MPs and MLAs are Members of the District and Block level Committees).